Illustrated Catalogue

of

Pictures

by

The Brothers Le Nain

Burlington Fine Arts Club

1911

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THE ARTIST'S STUDIO. (NO. 7)

Burlington Fine Arts Club

ILLUSTRATED CATALOGUE

OF

PICTURES

BY

THE BROTHERS LE NAIN

LONDON

PRINTED FOR THE BURLINGTON FINE ARTS CLUB

1910

CHISWICK PRESS: CHARLES WHITTINGHAM AND CO.
TOOKS COURT, CHANCERY LANE, LONDON.

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THE BROTHERS LE NAIN

PART I

HISTORICAL PREFACE

THE three brothers Le Nain were born at Laon in the north-east of France, Antoine in 1588, Louis in 1593, and Mathieu in 1607. Sons of a sergeant, they received a humble education, but apparently all three early evinced a talent for painting, receiving lessons from a foreigner whose identity has not been made out. Of their earlier career practically nothing is known, and it is not until 1629 that we hear of Antoine, then over forty years of age, being received as Master-painter at St. Germain-des-Près in Paris. A year later, all three brothers were settled in Paris, and were working together in the same studio. Mathieu was also received as Master-painter in 1633, and in 1648 all three were admitted members of the Academy *de la deuxième classe*, so-called to identify the members outside *Les Douze Anciens*. But two months later, and within two days of one another, Antoine and Louis both died, Mathieu outliving them by nearly thirty years, until 1677. At some period he became *Chevalier* of the Order of St. Michel, and a painter of portraits of considerable repute. When we have added that Louis Le Nain was surnamed Le Romain, presumably from a visit paid to Italy, we are in possession of all material facts known about the three brothers. Their lives appear uneventful, their very existence is almost unrecorded, save for the pictures which bear their names; but these have induced several French students of modern times to resuscitate their memory. But even the late M. Antony Valabrègue,

to whose industry and enthusiasm we owe the best account yet published,[1] knew but very few of the paintings to-day existing in English hands, for out of more than forty examples he cites only twelve. The present Exhibition, therefore, comprising some 25 paintings by the Le Nains, offers much fresh material for study, the results of which cannot yet be set forth. Signatures and dates must be sought out, so as to distinguish the individual styles of the three brothers. So far no one has succeeded in definitely establishing the respective shares of Antoine, Louis, and Mathieu in the *œuvre* of "Le Nain," and the problem is further complicated by the reported collaboration of two or even of the three on the same painting. One picture alone[2] is said to bear the distinguishing initial, L. Le Nain, and unfortunately none of the dated pictures—and there are a good many—are after 1648, between which date and 1677 Mathieu alone survived. It may be that the present exhibition will provide the clue, for so far the only evidence available has been an old manuscript written by a local priest at Laon between 1711 and 1723, in which he states that Antoine excelled "pour les mignatures et portraits en racourci," Louis "dans les portraits qui sont a demy-corps et en forme de buste," Mathieu "pour les grans tableaux comme ceux qui representent les mystères, les martyrs des saints, les batailles et semblables." These qualifications are not accurately enough defined to establish certainty in estimating the styles of the three brothers, so that we get Valabrègue, Champfleury, Clément de Ris, Paul Mantz, and other modern writers in anything but agreement as to the respective shares of the brothers in their admitted pictures.

Such is the problem of the brothers Le Nain. No estimate is here attempted of their art, which speaks for itself from the walls of the gallery. A list of their works—the most complete hitherto attempted—is subjoined.

H. C.

[1] Paris, 1904.

[2] At St. Petersburg. See "Gaz. des B. A.," 1880, p. 267; but see p. 20 of this Introduction.

PART II

SUGGESTED CLASSIFICATION OF THE WORKS OF THE BROTHERS LE NAIN

Owing to the almost entire absence of historical evidence with regard to the lives and careers of the three brothers Le Nain and the very small number of their signed or dated pictures, peculiar difficulties exist in forming an estimate of their *œuvre*, and in attempting to differentiate between them.

An endeavour can, however, be made from internal evidence to form some opinion as to the character of their work as a family, and even of the share which may, though with some hesitation, be ascribed to each.

The late M. Valabrègue has attempted something in the nature of attributions, but only in the case of a small number of pictures, and, indeed, as he appears to be unaware of the existence of some thirty pictures in England alone, as well as of many others on the Continent, his suggestions are necessarily somewhat limited.

It is interesting to remember that Antoine, the eldest of the brothers, was born eight years later than Frans Hals, Louis, the second brother, five years after Antoine, and Mathieu, the youngest, one year later than Rembrandt. It is surmised, though not capable of proof, that they were, at the beginning of their careers, under the influence of some foreign master, and one can hardly doubt that this master must have been either from Holland, or at least closely associated with the Dutch School. The works of various Dutch artists nearly related to those of the brothers Le Nain, and occasionally mistaken for theirs, will be dealt with more fully on a subsequent page.

One fact in connection with the three brothers is of great importance, viz., that they worked at the same time, in the same studio and, in all probability at least, in collaboration, until the death of the two elder, Antoine and Louis, in 1648, the very year in which they had become members of the newly-founded Academy.

Before attempting to distribute the most important of their pictures among the three brothers, it will be safer, in the absence of direct evidence as to their

work, to group their pictures as far as possible by internal evidence of style, and having found that, roughly speaking, they fall into certain fairly well-defined groups, it may be possible to ascribe each of these groups to one or more of the brothers.

GROUP I

In the first group may be brought together a series of *genre* pictures and small portrait-pieces, of which the "Portrait Group" in the National Gallery (No. 1425) is a typical example.

Here we have a closeness and comparative minuteness of treatment, as also a gay and attractive colour scheme, which seldom occur in the usually larger and heavier pictures from the Le Nain studio. There is the same dryness in the technique that may be noticed in some of their work on a bigger scale, but these little pictures show considerable vivacity and real distinction of type, with no small power of rendering facial expression. The tones are generally warm, the flesh tints smooth and unbroken, the paint luminous and transparent. The painting of the eyes with minute points of white in the pupils, the hair in little wisps, the red lips, the well-developed chins of the children, are all characteristic of this phase or
PLATE V this painter. The Duke of Sutherland's picture (No. 6) exhibits all these features and may be compared, especially in the painting of the hair, with that in the National Gallery. The "Group of Six Children," lent by
PLATE IV Mr. Crews (No. 5), is also similar in character, though painted on panel, whereas the Duke of Sutherland's picture, like others in this group, is on copper. The piping boy in No. 5, seems to be a younger edition of the youth in the Ionides picture (No. 17 in the Victoria and Albert Museum).

To this group may also be assigned the remarkable "Grace before Meat," in the collection of M. Eugène Hamot in Paris and Lord Aldenham's
PLATE I little canvas (No. 1), which shows the same warm tones and unusually brilliant colouring as the last, and the "Family Repast" in St. Petersburg (No. 1494), though on a somewhat larger scale.

In connection with the Hamot picture, too, may be mentioned the small "Portraits in an Interior" (Louvre, No. 543), peculiarly amorphous in arrangement and wholly lacking in pictorial unity. This picture is essentially a series of portraits, as is also the "Family Group" (Louvre, No. 543A),

containing twelve admirably characterized portrait-heads, somewhat confusedly distributed. "The Musicians," in the Dulwich Gallery (No. 180), a group of three figures at a table, is intimately connected with the "Portraits in an Interior," and obviously by the same hand. Related to these last two mentioned is Lord Lonsdale's "Children Dancing," at Lowther Castle, another version of which, with slight variations, is lent by Mr. Humphry Ward (No. 19). In these the children belong to the types of those in the National Gallery, the Duke of Sutherland and Mr. Crews's pictures, while, on the other hand, the figure of the old woman in the background is that of the Laon, Lille and St. Petersburg "Family Repasts" belonging, as we shall see, to the second group.

Closely connected with the first group, especially with the "Family Group" in the Louvre (No. 543A), is the picture lent by the Dowager Marchioness of Bute (No. 7), which, however, stands somewhat apart. FRONTISPIECE According to tradition it represents the studio of the brothers Le Nain. Here the handling is rather different—more sketchy, more summary, with a certain elegance, and with less of the *genre* manner.

More doubtfully attributed to the Le Nains is the "Procession in a Church," in the Louvre (No. 544), but its apparent connection with the "Episcopal Blessing" in Madrid (No. 1260), with its assemblage of kneeling figures arranged in the manner of the foregoing pictures, adds some probability to the ascription, and in that event links it with this group.

GROUP II

The second, and considerably the largest group, comprises those peasant scenes with which the name of Le Nain is generally associated. Typical examples are the two pictures, differing indeed in tone, but very similar in character, in the Ionides Collection in the Victoria and Albert Museum (Nos. 17 and 18). They are especially characteristic of this group in their total absence of pictorial composition, the bluff almost abrupt manner in which the figures bulk in the foreground (particularly in No. 17), the almost entire lack of inter-relation between them, and the homely and direct representation of the scene. Containing as they do figures of men, women and children, they form characteristic examples of a type or

composition varied in many ways, yet always possessing certain persistent features. Another version of the Ionides picture with the standing figure of a milkmaid (No. 17) was in the Sedelmeyer Collection (Sale, Paris, 1907, No. 222).

Closely associated with these are the "Family of Peasants" at
PLATE XVII St. Petersburg (No. 1493), the Petworth "Lazzaroni," and the pictures
PLATE IX (Nos. 9 and 12) in this Exhibition belonging to the Duke of Rutland and the Earl of Carlisle, identical compositions in which the figures show a certain detachment from their background, against which they are somewhat stiffly posed. The "Peasants' Repast" at Lille (No. 1111) may, from the monumental character of its figures in a picture on so small a scale, as well as by the dryness of its touch, be classed with these. The painting of the bare feet and of the hands, with their sharply accentuated fingers and long finger nails, is exceedingly characteristic. Here too may be mentioned the so-called "Country Life," belonging to Messrs. Sulley and Co., in which the *motif* of the woman with a distaff of the Lille picture again occurs, as also in No. 40 here, on a larger scale, lent by the Hon. Mrs. Baillie Hamilton.

PLATE VII Sir Audley Neeld's picture (No. 10), too, shows close affinities with the Ionides pictures, especially in the broad sweeping landscape. The small figures in the foreground, sharply defined and placed very awkwardly both in relation to one another and to the landscape, have the same detachment as the two figures on the right in Nos. 9 and 12. A picture in the collection of the Duke of Westminster is identical but for some slight differences in the middle distance. It has, moreover, a finer surface, and the painting of the windy sky is superb. In these examples we may certainly assume collaboration between at least two of the brothers.

To this group also belongs "The Return from the Haymaking" (Louvre, No. 542), also called "The Wagon," which, like the last-mentioned, suggests two hands, one employed in the background, the other adding unrelated and ill-composed groups of figures in the foreground and middle distance. Dealing with similar types and in a somewhat similar manner,
PLATE XIV Mr. Arthur Kay's picture (No. 24) betrays the same hand or hands. The composition bears certain resemblances to the previous examples, and in such details as the large detached stones and in the character of the background with distant figures lightly sketched and half-merged in it, for instance those looking from the window, affords many parallels. Similar in style

is the example in the Metropolitan Museum, New York. Lord Bagot's picture (No. 16), with its flat and awkward arrangement of figures against a wall, may be included in this group, to which also belongs No. 25, lent by the Hunterian Museum, Glasgow. Here, however, we find a stronger sense of composition, and the handling is broader and freer, suggesting a later stage in the development of the artists. Allied to this a picture, also representing a scene at a well, and containing more or less the same figures in somewhat the same arrangement, was in the Sedelmeyer Collection (Sale 1907, No. 223), and a rather similar composition is lent by Mr. Christopher Turnor (No. 23). These three pictures have in subject, composition and detail, much in common with the "Figures with Sheep at a Well," ascribed to Van Herp in the Dulwich Gallery (No. 332). The composition and colour of this last-named work are in many respects based upon those of the Glasgow picture. In both we find the group of the woman and child, the sheep, goats and cow and stone drinking-trough practically identical. The same well and pulley, too, occur both in the Dulwich and Sedelmeyer pictures, and many other resemblances present themselves on comparison. We must, therefore, either attribute these last-mentioned pictures to Van Herp, or assume that the Dulwich picture is also a work of the Le Nains belonging to this group. This latter seems by far the more probable conclusion, as a comparison of these pictures with other works by Van Herp, *e.g.* the pictures in Bridgewater House (Nos. 180 and 181) and in the National Gallery (No. 203), reveals but little connection between them, while, on the other hand, close analogies exist between this group and certain works undoubtedly by the Le Nains, especially the signed "Grace before Meat" at St. Petersburg (No. 1492), mentioned later. We may refer to the figure of the man with the ass in the Dulwich and Sedelmeyer pictures, which occurs again in "The Villagers' Repast," of the Louvre (No. 541), while the peculiar forked tree in the Glasgow, Dulwich and Sedelmeyer pictures is found in several other examples by the brothers. The same old man in No. 23 occurs also in Comte de Seysell's "Scène de Vendange" at Turin, one of a series of seven pictures identical in size, but showing some divergences in style. The woman in this last-named canvas is found also in Dr. Müller's picture (No. 22), and in another picture in M. Noguès' collection in Paris. "The Children Dancing," of the Seysell series also belongs to this group and is closely allied to the "Scène de Vendange."

PLATE XV

PLATE XIII

With this group of open-air pictures must be connected also the series
PLATE X of Interiors, of which the Duke of Leeds's fine picture (No. 13) may be regarded as typical. The treatment is again similar, broad and somewhat dry, and the figures are squarely and solidly set. In these Interiors the background is often the same, no doubt taken from the painter's own studio, with its deep-set chimney-piece supported with pillars. Here a warm glow from the fire is reflected upon the face of a child standing by the hearth, a *motif* repeated in the Family Repasts at Laon and Lille. Close to these comes the "Peasants' Repast" (Louvre, No. 548) with its replicas in the Sedelmeyer Sale (No. 221), and the version
PLATE XVI exhibited here by the Earl of Wemyss (No. 26). Such accessories as the jug upon the table and the glass of wine are identical with those in the Duke of Leeds's picture (No. 13), and several others in this Exhibition, and must have been studio properties, like the huge brass milk-can in the Ionides, Glasgow and Kay pictures. A more ambitious and possibly later picture by the same hand is the important canvas lent
PLATE VI by Sir Hubert Parry (No. 8), chaotic in composition and by no means successful in rendering the idea of a quarrel, if that indeed be the meaning of the picture. The youth on the right is the boy we have met before in the Duke of Leeds's picture (No. 13), but here he is older. Closely connected in composition and types is the "Forge" (Louvre, No. 540), which is further distinguished by strong chiaroscuro effects. The seated figure on the right is almost identical with that of the man by the horse in the Ionides "Landscape with Figures" (Victoria and Albert Museum, No. 17). The "Nativity" in the Louvre (No. 539), and the "Nativity" at Rennes, which for all its differences of character has been attributed by M. Gonse to the brothers Le Nain, both show a similar research after chiaroscuro.

GROUP III

The third group of pictures, for all their family resemblance, stands far more distinctly apart from the rest, and indicates a more accomplished and experienced hand and indeed a somewhat different temperament and outlook. The treatment is broader and more flowing, the impasto richer, the composition in general less chaotic, more studied and built-up. The

figures are less silhouetted against the background, and the pictures appear indeed to be the work of one hand rather than the result of collaboration.

In this group, too, even the facial types are different, the features large and open, often with curiously long, straight noses, the flesh tints more fused. The colour scheme, in which the bistres and greys of Group II still predominate, includes often a good deal of the warm scarlet which all the brothers seem to have affected, but the colour composition has advanced in unity and breadth.

A characteristic example is found in Mr. Wilfrid Ashley's "Gamesters" (No. 3). The types are those of cavaliers and gentlemen, well dressed and in comparatively easy postures. The stiffness and gauche attitudes of the figures in Group II have given way here to greater naturalness and freedom. PLATE III

Very similar in character is the writer's "Travellers at an Inn" (No. 15) with its characteristic greys and warm scarlet, also representing, but on a larger scale, a group of men seated round a table. This picture is probably that described in Bryan's Dictionary as the "Interior of an inn with a party of travellers, an itinerant performer on the hurdy-gurdy, and several other figures, a picture of unusually large dimensions." The same accessories, the tall hats, the wine-glasses, the straw-covered wine-bottle and the stools are repeated in other pictures in the exhibition, and some of them occur again in the "Marriage Contract," also a picture of considerable size, which appeared in a recent sale in Paris. Akin, though on a smaller scale, is the picture at Magdeburg, representing "Youths at a Meal," ascribed in the catalogue of the Museum (No. 5) to Michael Sweerts, but obviously by the same hand as Nos. 3 and 15 here. This also is a study in greys, with a red cloak giving the one strong note of colour. PLATE XI

The large "Group of Men round a Table" in the collection of Countess Edmond de Pourtalès, with its strong chiaroscuro effects, a signed and dated picture, belongs to the same category. With these two we associate the "Players at Trictrac," the "Family Repast," and the "Dancing Lesson" in the series of pictures belonging to the Comte de Seysell at Turin, already mentioned. A feature common to each of these pictures, as also to No. 15, is the standing figure of the long-haired youth on the left. In the large picture sold at Christie's in 1907, and now in the possession of Messrs.

PLATE XVIII Bernheim-Jeune, Paris (Plate XVIII), representing a Bacchanalian procession, the same figures occur on the right-hand side, while the familiar straw-covered wine-bottle does duty here too. The same types appear in a picture of quite unusual animation in the "Men and Boys Fighting" in Count Scheremetew's Collection near Moscow.

Possibly from the same hand, though on a smaller scale, proceeds the "Artist painting a Lady," Munich (No. 1339). The similarity of costume in these two pictures is striking, while the model recalls the lady in the "Family Group" of the Louvre (No. 543A). The same models would naturally have been used by the brothers more or less in common. An PLATE II example of this occurs in Sir Frederick Cook's picture (No. 2), which, in its breadth of treatment, like the charming picture lent from Rotterdam (No. 21 here) surely belongs to this last group (III), though the types both of the old woman and the children are the same as those in the "Grace before Meat" of M. Hamot and others in the first group. Similar again in character is the picture in Buckingham Palace of "The Card Players." Characteristic in its grey and warm red colouring, its flowing touch and strong chiaroscuro, this beautiful little picture ranks among the most accomplished of the works of this group. The Louvre possesses a similar composition, but containing more figures. The little Interior with Figures PLATE XII lent by the Corporation of Glasgow (No. 20), though of a more *genre* character, and inspired with greater sentimentality than is usual in the work of the Le Nains, is in technique, especially in the loaded high lights in the whites, and the painting of the flesh tones and hair, so close to the Rotterdam picture (No. 21) that it may well be classed with it.

Under Group III, also, it is suggested, should be included the series of portraits which are scantily represented in this country by the half-length portrait of a young man at the Fitzwilliam Museum at PLATE XIX Cambridge (Plate XIX), and probably by the "Portrait of Cardinal Mazarin" (No. 4) lent by Earl Brownlow, which, in its largeness of modelling and open features, offers many analogies with the work of this group.[1] Others of the series include the "Portrait of a Boy" in the Louvre, the portrait of a young man at Laon, with its affinities of feature and costume to the figures

[1] A portrait of the Cardinal from the hand of one of the Le Nains is recorded in 1646, as having been exhibited at the Academy (Valabrègue, *op. cit.*, 18). Can it be that we have here this lost picture?

in Nos. 3 and 15, the somewhat similar portrait of a man at Le Puys supposed to be that of one of the three brothers, the full-length, life-sized portrait of the Marquis Cinq-Mars belonging to the Baron Seillière, and those of Henri II, Duc de Montmorency, in the Louvre (No. 545), the Marquis de St. Phal at Troyes, and a Chevalier of the Order of St. Michael at Lyons.

The portrait of the Marquise de Forbin-Janson at Avignon, from its rigidity, angularity and stiffness, as well as from the treatment of the hands, would seem to connect itself with the principal artist of the second group.

Standing somewhat apart from the two groups already mentioned is Mr. Wilfred Ashley's "Itinerant Musician" (No. 11), with which, though tentatively, may be associated, on account of the character of their landscape backgrounds and of their tumultuous movement, Lord Lonsdale's "Bacchanalian Dance" and "Les Tendres Adieux de la Laitière." Mr. Ashley's picture, however, is somewhat Dutch in character, with certain affinities with the style of Frans Hals, and is probably considerably later than the pictures already mentioned. Lord Lonsdale's pictures, on the other hand, are distinctly Italian in character, while again the figures recall many of the features in Group II, such as the milk-maid and boys in the Ionides picture (Victoria and Albert Museum, No. 17). It is therefore difficult to apportion them as between Groups II and III, but on the whole No. 11 would seem to belong to Group III, and the Lowther Castle pair to Group II.

PLATE VIII

Having now tentatively and diffidently classified a considerable number of examples into three groups, is it possible to identify these groups with the work of the individual brothers?

The question may first be considered from the point of view of date. Antoine and Louis were, as we have seen, considerably older than Mathieu, who was born nineteen years after Antoine, and fourteen years later than Louis, and was only forty-one years of age when his brothers died in 1648. Apart from Sir Hubert Parry's picture, where the figures are illegible,[1] the

[1] The date on this picture has some likeness to 1640.

dates on the eight dated pictures range from 1641, the earliest, to 1647, the latest, the year before the two elder brothers were both admitted to the Academy and died. Any of these pictures, therefore, from the point of view of date, may be the work of any one brother.

Now of these eight dated pictures, the "Portraits in an Interior" (Louvre, No. 543) and the "Family Group" (Louvre, No. 543A) belong to Group I, the "Peasants' Repast" (Louvre, No. 548), the "Return from the Hay-making" (Louvre, No. 542), and the Avignon portrait, fall under Group II, while the Pourtalès picture and the Laon portrait have been placed in Group III. It seems, therefore, that the question of date throws little light on the problem.

The question of signature is equally unconvincing. M. Valabrègue, indeed (*op. cit.*, pp. 33 and 42), and M. Clément de Ris, in an article upon the Hermitage Gallery, St. Petersburg ("Gazette des Beaux Arts," 2^{me} Serie, 1880, p. 266), state that one picture in the Hermitage, the "Grace before Meat" (No. 1492), is signed L. Le Nain, that is to say, by Louis. The importance of this would be obvious, for it would make it the only picture evidenced by signature as belonging to one particular brother, and would identify one of Louis' pictures beyond dispute, while from this it should be possible to reconstitute the whole of his work. Unfortunately, however, this important signature, which has been carefully examined by the writer and is given in facsimile in the French Edition of the Hermitage catalogue, is only "L Nain F.", the L, no doubt, standing for the "Le," and not L. Le Nain at all, so that the whole argument falls to the ground. Ten other pictures are signed, but in every case also only with the surname Lenain and the word Fecit or the letter "F." From the signatures, therefore, as little direct evidence is to be obtained as from the dates.

We learn from the authorities cited by M. Valabrègue that Antoine and Louis were known on admission to the Academy as painters of "Bambochades," viz., common or familiar objects, or what is now termed "Genre," while Mathieu was recognized as a portrait-painter. Mathieu was further described by Champfleury as a court painter and portraitist of reputation. According to Claude l'Eleu, Antoine was a painter of small pictures and portraits "en racourci." Too much weight must not be attached to these rather vague generalities, but it is interesting to note that in Group I we find a number of small groups treated with minuteness and even tightness

rather in the manner of the early seventeenth century than in the freer, more flowing touch which became the pervading style as the century advanced.

The suggestion here made is that the pictures brought together in Group I are exclusively the works of the elder brother, Antoine. There would seem to be no indication of collaboration in such pictures as the "Portrait Group" in the National Gallery (No. 1425) or the little pictures here belonging to Lord Aldenham and Mr. Crews (Nos. 1 and 5), all of which are very characteristic of the works brought together in Group I.

Further, what we have called Group II may for the most part be the work of the second brother Louis, but in some of the pictures there has been collaboration between Antoine and himself, possibly also with Mathieu who would, however, no doubt have taken a very subordinate part in the work of his elder brothers. This fact would also account for the second being the largest of the three groups. In many of the canvasses classed under this group a certain want of inter-relation between the figures and landscapes is noticeable, as in Nos. 9, 10, and 12, also in the Ionides "Landscape with Figures" (Victoria and Albert Museum, No. 17) the "Return from the Haymaking" (Louvre, No. 542), the "Family of Peasants" in St. Petersburg (No. 1493), the Family Repasts at Laon and Lille, and many others. A general want of composition and arrangement tends to confirm this traditional theory of collaboration.

The visit of Louis to Italy, which is suggested by his nickname of Le Romain, does not seem to have resulted in the corruption of his native style, as was so often the case among his contemporaries, though at the same time it is easy to see that a strong feeling for chiaroscuro, which perhaps shows itself most definitely in the "Forge" (Louvre, No. 540), and the Louvre and Rennes "Nativities," has entered as a new factor in the works proceeding from the Le Nain studio, to be developed on other lines, as in the case of the Pourtalès picture, by the younger Mathieu.

There remain then the pictures of Group III, which, as we have seen, show indications of a maturer, later hand, and indeed differentiate themselves in style and spirit from the works of what, broadly speaking, we may consider the two earlier groups. May these marked divergences from the better known Le Nain manner be explained by assigning to Mathieu, who survived his brothers nearly thirty years, this group of paintings? The period of Mathieu's maturity coincides indeed with that of the School of the

Haarlem masters founded by Frans Hals, with whose work these pictures show a certain affinity. They are, moreover, thoroughly in keeping with the character of "Chevalier," from which title, as from Louis' designation of "Le Romain," it is perhaps permissible, in the absence of direct evidence, to draw some inferences.

In view of the difficulties which have arisen in regard to the attribution of certain pictures to the Le Nains, it may be worth while to consider briefly the work of certain artists painting about the same time and engaged on much the same subjects and problems as the brothers.

In Holland such men as Jan Miense Molenaer, Michael Sweerts, G. van Honthorst, Jan Miel, W. van Herp, Hendrik Mommers and others developed so much on the same lines that works by them have been not infrequently confounded with those of the brothers Le Nain and *vice versa.* As an instance, in this Exhibition Mr. Hirsch's fine picture (No. 14), for all its apparent connection with the Le Nains, to whom it has until recently been ascribed, is surely more properly identified with the work of Jan Miense Molenaer, and may be compared in this connection with the example of that artist in the possession of Sir Edgar Speyer, while a picture by Molenaer, containing the same figures, is in the collection of Mr. Van Alen. The work of W. van Herp, as we have seen in the case of the Dulwich picture, may also be readily confused. Indeed, two pictures at Gotha (Nos. 85 and 86), formerly ascribed to Le Nain, have been identified as his by Dr. Bredius, while another picture, also at Gotha (No. 121), and also ascribed to the Le Nains, has been assigned by the same critic to the Haarlem *genre* and landscape painter, Hendrik Mommers. The interesting picture (No. 19) in the Moltke Collection, Copenhagen, signed "C V R," and attributed to Caspar van Ravesteyn, has also many close affinities with the work of the Le Nains.

Michael Sweerts, too, who is represented here by several pictures (Nos. 30 and 31) and a drawing by him or somewhat akin to his work (No. 32), is often, as in the case of the Magdeburg "Youths at a Meal," already mentioned, mistaken for Le Nain, while on the other hand, Nos. 28 and 29, lent to the Exhibition by Mr. Arthur Clifton as works of Le Nain,

have been identified by Dr. de Groot as from the hand of Sweerts. Similarly a picture by Honthorst at Brunswick (No. 175) has been claimed impartially for the brothers Le Nain, Michael Sweerts, and even for Murillo.

Mr. Clifton's pictures, indeed (Nos. 28 and 29), were at one time ascribed to Zurbaran, which is interesting as illustrating the strong resemblance between certain pictures of the Spanish School and the works of this Dutch and French group. Nor is it possible not to observe some affinities with those late Italian and Neapolitan *Naturalisti* whose interests set so strongly in the direction of chiaroscuro effects.

The work, too, of a French compatriot, Sébastien Bourdon, has in his smaller pieces some resemblance to that of the Le Nains. This is illustrated in the interesting picture lent by Mr. Fairfax Murray (No. 17), which, though ascribed to Le Nain, seems more likely to be by the hand of Bourdon, whose style in this almost Dutch manner is illustrated by two pictures at Cassel (Nos. 471 and 472). Among other French artists whose work shows some similarity with that of the Le Nains may be mentioned Varin, Claude Lefebvre (National Portrait Gallery, Portrait of "Rev. Isaac Barrow"), Finsonius, Laurent Fauchier his pupil, and Valentin. A fine example of this last-named painter's work is in Bridgewater House (No. 2).

Of drawings by the Le Nains few are known. One in the British Museum with Heads of Children has some resemblance to the small portraits of children belonging to Group I. The group of seven figures, a pen-and-ink sketch, lent by Mr. Heseltine (No. 27), would be connected with Group II. The attribution of the "Figures of two Peasants," in the Louvre, is more uncertain.

The Le Nains painted for the most part on canvas, though some of their smaller pictures are on panel or copper.

In attempting to form an estimate of the artistic value of the work of the brothers Le Nain an obvious danger must be faced. The interest attaching to these mysterious and elusive personalities is a temptation to overrate the quality of their painting. Above all, it must be borne in mind that their art is essentially provincial. Of Antoine and Louis this is particularly true. They seem to have held themselves aloof from the traditions and mannerisms of the Court of Louis XIV and remote from all those influences which gave to the art of the period associated with the

Grand Monarch the character it bears. Their drawing at times leaves something to be desired; their colouring, like their choice of subject, may lack variety, their ideas of composition seem to have been rudimentary. There is something almost archaic in much of their early work.

But these are the defects commonly associated with the qualities they undoubtedly possessed. They were, above all, honest and sincere, direct and unaffected in their art. There is much, too, which is original in their outlook, and a consideration of the pictures exhibited in this Exhibition, and of the reproductions of other works not shown here, should dispel any idea that they are monotonous and uniform in their style. In an age of pomposity and elaborate ostentation they were reticent, modest, austere. The influence of Le Brun, which had already begun to dominate the art of France, seems to have had no effect upon them. Even Mathieu, who lived through the opening and triumphant years of the Academy, remained unacademic, and, we may fear, therefore, unorthodox to the last. Their art never become grandiose, never pretentious. At the same time, with all their seriousness, there is real charm and even humour in their portrayal of children. These little figures are always sympathetic, with wistful yet piquant faces. In their larger canvases a curious intensity and immobility are often predominant. There is considerable dormant power, but any expression of activity or vitality is rare.

In the limited scope and space of an exhibition and catalogue such as this it is impossible to deal at all adequately with a subject so large and so comparatively unexplored as the work of the brothers Le Nain and their relation to the art of their day. The object of this assemblage of their works and of these few suggestions will have been achieved if they serve to stimulate inquiry and provoke criticism.

ROBERT C. WITT.

LIST OF WORKS BY, OR ATTRIBUTED TO, THE BROTHERS LE NAIN

NOTE.—*The letter* (P.) *after the title of the picture indicates that a photograph or other reproduction is upon the table of the Club.*

FRANCE

Louvre.

No. 539 THE NATIVITY. (P.)
2.36 by 1.39 cm.

540 THE FORGE. (P.)
0.69 by 0.57 cm.

541 THE VILLAGERS' REPAST. (P.)
0.92 by 1.17 cm.

542 RETURN FROM THE HAYMAKING OR THE WAGON. (P.)
0.56 by 0.72 cm. Signed and dated LE NAIN FECIT. 1641.

543 PORTRAITS IN AN INTERIOR. (P.)
On copper, 0.29 by 0.37 cm. Signed and dated LE NAIN FECIT. 1647.

543A FAMILY GROUP. (P.)
0.32 by 0.40 cm. Signed and dated LE NAIN FECIT. 1642.

544 PROCESSION IN A CHURCH. (P.)
On copper, 0.34 by 65 cm. (attribution doubtful.)

545 PORTRAIT OF HENRY II, DUKE OF MONTMORENCY. (P.)
0.64 by 0.54 cm. (attribution doubtful).

546 THE CARD PLAYERS. (P.)
On copper, 0.13 by 0.16 cm.

547 DENIAL OF S. PETER. (P.)
0.97 by 1.52 cm. (attribution doubtful).

548 PEASANTS' REPAST. (P.)
0.97 by 1.22 cm. Signed and dated LE NAIN FECIT AN° 1642. Collection Lacaze. Replicas are No. 221 in the Sedelmeyer Sale, 1907, and No. 26, exhibited here by the Earl of Wemyss. (Plate XVI.)

PORTRAIT OF A BOY. (Recently acquired.)

Drawing. TWO PEASANTS SEATED. (P.)
0.409 by 0.288 cm. (attribution doubtful).

Note.—" The Watering-Place," No. 376 in the old Louvre catalogue, is included by M. Valabrègue in his List of Le Nain's works, but is not ascribed to him in the present catalogue.

Église Saint-Étienne du Mont, Paris.

THE NATIVITY.

2.20 by 1.45 cm.

Aix-en-Provence.

SOLDIERS PLAYING CARDS. (P.)

Formerly attributed to Sébastien Bourdon.

Amiens.

THE DRINKER.

Attribution doubtful. Suggested by M. Gonse.

Angers.

NATIVITY. No. 88.

Avignon.

1 PORTRAIT OF THE MARQUISE DE FORBIN-JANSON. (P.)

0.74 by 57 cm. Signed and dated LE NAIN f^it^ 1644.

2 PORTRAIT OF ONE OF THE PERUZZI FAMILY.

0.56 by 0.44 cm. (Attribution doubtful).

Dijon.

PORTRAIT OF THE SCULPTOR ATTIRET. No. 125.

Attribution doubtful.

Épinal.

WOMAN VISITING A PRISONER.

The connection of this picture with the Rennes "Nativity" has been suggested by M. Gonse.

Laon.

1 THE FAMILY REPAST. (P.)

0.64 by 0.32 cm. Another version of this picture at Lille, No. 470.

2 THE MARRIAGE CONTRACT.

0.56 by 0.67 cm. Engraved as "La Fiancée Normande."

3 PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG MAN. (P.)

0.60 by 0.53 cm. Dated 1646.

Lille.

1 THE FAMILY REPAST, also known as "La Chambre de la Grandmère." No. 470.

0.60 by 0.74 cm. Another version of this picture at Laon.

2 PEASANTS' REPAST OUT OF DOORS. No. 1111. (P.)

Lyons.

PORTRAIT OF A MAN IN A LACE COLLAR. (P.)

The attribution is suggested by M. Gonse.

Montpellier.

TWO YOUNG MEN DRAWING IN A STUDIO.

Catalogued under the name of Valentin. The attribution is suggested by M. Gonse.

Nancy.

GRACE BEFORE MEAT.

0.47 by 0.58 cm. Signed LE NAIN FECIT.

Nantes.

RUSTIC INTERIOR.

0.64 by 0.80 cm.

Orleans.

THE LITTLE CHIMNEY-SWEEP.

M. Gonse suggests a resemblance to the Drinker at Amiens.

Paris. Sale, 1878 (Hotel Drouot).

RUSTIC SCENE.

Paris. Sale, May, 1909.

THE MARRIAGE CONTRACT. (P.)

91 by 1.08 cm.

Paris. Sedelmeyer Sale, 1907.

1 PEASANT'S REPAST. (No. 221.)

1.03 by 1.19 cm. Replica of picture in Louvre, No. 548, and of No. 26 here lent by the Earl of Wemyss.

2 GROUP OF PEASANTS. (No. 222.) (P.)

55 by 66 cm. Replica of the Ionides picture, Victoria and Albert Museum, No. 17.

3 GROUP OF PEASANTS AT A WELL. (No. 223.) (P.)

97 by 1.01 cm.

4 PEASANT WOMAN WITH GIRL AND FOUR CHILDREN. (No. 224.)

49 by 58 cm.

Le Puy.

1 SO-CALLED PORTRAIT OF LE NAIN. (P.)

0.61 by 0.57 cm. Attribution doubtful according to M. Gonse.

2 A MOTHER AND CHILD.

0.48 by 0.38 cm.

Rennes.

1 THE NATIVITY.

0.76 by 0.91 cm. A night scene. Attribution doubtful, but suggested by M. Gonse. Illustrated in L. Gonse, "Chefs d'œuvre des Musées de France," p. 273.

2 VIRGIN AND CHILD, S. ANNE AND ANGELS.

0.38 by 0.58 cm. (Much restored and retouched.)

Rouen.

RUSTIC INTERIOR.
0.51 by 0.64 cm.

Troyes.

PORTRAIT OF THE MARQUIS DE SAINT PHAL. (P.)
0.59 by 0.53 cm. Formerly ascribed to Louis Le Nain.

Private Possession.

M. Allard, Paris.
RUSTIC SCENE.

MM. Bernheim Jeune, Paris.
PLATE XVIII BACCHANALIAN PROCESSION. (P.)
About 4 by 6 feet.

M. Frederic Donnadieu, Beziers.
THE BIRD-NESTERS.
1.07 by 1.33 cm.

M. E. Eischof, Paris.
FAMILY REPAST. (P.)
86 by 114 cm. Replica, with slight differences, of Comte de Seysell's "Family Repast."

Mme. Édouard Fleury, Vorges (Aisne).
INTERIOR OF A FARM.
1.17 by 0.98 cm.

M. Eugène Hamot, Paris.
GRACE BEFORE MEAT. (P.)
On copper. 0.16 by 0.19 cm.

Formerly Mme. Kestner, Paris.
FAMILY REPAST.

Dr. Paul Müller, Paris.
PEASANTS' REPAST. (P.) (Here exhibited.)
37½ by 47 inches. Replica of Comte de Seysell's and M. Prarond's pictures.

M. G. Noguès, Paris.
FAMILY REPAST. (P.)
64 by 82 cm. Exhibited at the Kunstverein, Leipzig, 1910.

Countess Edmond de Pourtalès, Paris.
GROUP OF MEN ROUND A TABLE. (P.)
1.17 by 1.37 cm. Signed and dated LE NAIN FECIT, 1643.

M. Prarond, Abbeville.
FAMILY REPAST.
Replica of Comte de Seysell's and Mme. Kestner's pictures.

Ex Baron Seillière, Mello, near Beauvais. Now *E. Hodgkins*, London.
HENRI COIFFIER DE RUZÉ, MARQUIS DE CINQ-MARS. (P.)
2.15 by 1.05 cm. A copy of this picture by Lestang is at Versailles.

M. Souëf, Près-les-Thierry, near Laon.
"LES PETITS PAINS."
0.30 by 0.23 cm.

M. Warneck, Paris.
PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG MAN. (P.)
On copper.

M. Alex. Weill, Paris.
Family Scenes.
1 THE FINISHED MEAL.
0.58 by 0.70 cm. Replica of "The Family Repast" at Laon and Lille.
2 THE FAMILY AT TABLE.
0.58 by 0.73 cm.

GERMANY

Magdeburg.
YOUTHS AT A MEAL. No. 5. (P.)
0.64 by 0.80 cm. Ascribed in the catalogue to Michael Sweerts.

Munich, Pinacothek.
THE ARTIST, IN HIS STUDIO. No. 1339. (P.)
0.52 by 0.62 cm.

Munich, Helbing Sale, March, 1910, No. 105.
THE MARKET WOMAN. (P.)

Schwerin.
MAN IN ARMOUR.
0.45 by 0.34 cm. Attribution doubtful; also ascribed to Jean Ducq.

GREAT BRITAIN

Public Collections

National Gallery.
PORTRAIT GROUP, "TASTING." No. 1425. (P.)
Panel, 10 by 12¼ inches.

Victoria and Albert Museum. Ionides Collection.

1 LANDSCAPE WITH FIGURES. No. 17. (P.)
21½ by 26½ inches. (Replica in Sedelmeyer Sale, 1907, No. 222.)

2 THE PIPER. No. 18. (P.)
21¾ by 26 inches.

British Museum.

DRAWING. Seven heads and other fragments. On blue paper. (P.)

Buckingham Palace.

THE CARD PLAYERS. (P.)
21¼ by 24¼ inches.

Dulwich.

1. THE MUSICIANS. No. 180.
12 by 15¼ inches.

2. FIGURES WITH SHEEP AT A WELL. No. 332.
Ascribed in the Dulwich Gallery Catalogue to Van Herp.

Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge.

PLATE XIX PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG MAN. (P.)
8½ by 6½ inches.

Glasgow, Corporation Art Gallery.

PLATE XII INTERIOR WITH FIGURES. No. 655. (Here exhibited.)
11 by 9 inches.

Glasgow, Hunterian Museum.

PLATE XV WOMAN SELLING FRUIT. (P.) (Here exhibited.)
34 by 42½ inches.

Private Possession

Lord Aldenham.

PLATE I THE YOUNG MUSICIANS. (P.) (Here exhibited.)
11½ by 15½ inches.

Wilfrid Ashley, Esq.

PLATE VIII 1 THE ITINERANT MUSICIAN. (Here exhibited.)
56½ by 73 inches.

PLATE III 2 THE CARD PLAYERS. (Here exhibited.)
33 by 45 inches.

Lord Bagot.

A POOR FAMILY. (Here exhibited.)
16½ by 20¾ inches.

Hon. Mrs. Baillie Hamilton.

OLD WOMAN WITH DISTAFF. (Here exhibited.) (P.)
44 by 36 inches.

C. Weld-Blundell, Esq., Ince Hall.

(Subject unknown.)

Earl Brownlow.

PORTRAIT OF CARDINAL MAZARIN. (Here exhibited.)
29 by 24 inches.

Dowager Marchioness of Bute.

THE ARTIST'S STUDIO. (P.) (Here exhibited.) FRONTISPIECE
Panel, 15¾ by 11½ inches.

Earl of Caledon.

1. FRENCH PEASANT FAMILY.
2. WOMEN SEATED, THREE CHILDREN AND A BEGGAR.

Earl of Carlisle.

PEASANT LIFE. (Here exhibited.) PLATE XI
20¼ by 25½ inches. (Same subject as Duke of Rutland's picture, No. 9.)

Sir Frederick Cook, Bart.

GRACE BEFORE MEAT. Four Figures. (Here exhibited.) PLATE II
17½ by 2½ inches.

Charles T. D. Crews, Esq.

GROUP OF SIX CHILDREN. (Here exhibited.) PLATE IV
7½ by 9¾ inches.

Ex Lord Dunmore.

FOUR MEN PLAYING AT DICE AND ANOTHER FIGURE. (Mentioned by Dr. Waagen.)

J. P. Heseltine, Esq.

DRAWING. Group of seven figures. (Pen-and-ink.)
4 by 3½ inches.

Arthur Kay, Esq., Glasgow.

THE VILLAGE POULTERER. (P.) (Here exhibited.) PLATE XIV
39 by 51½ inches.

Lord Leconfield, Petworth.

LAZZARONI. Seven Figures. Plate No. XVII. PLATE XVII

Duke of Leeds.

PLATE X A FLEMISH INTERIOR. (Here exhibited.)
22 by 25½ inches.

Earl of Lonsdale, Lowther Castle.

1. CHILDREN DANCING (P.)
Engraved by A. Bannerman. Jno. Boydell excudit. 1767. Vol. II, No. 18. A version of this picture on panel, 12½ by 15¾ inches, with signature and dated 1643, from the Charles Butler Collection, was sold at Christie's, July, 1911.

2. BACCHANALIAN DANCE. (P.)

3. LES TENDRES ADIEUX DE LA LAITIÈRE. (P.)

R. Miller, Esq.

GROUP OF FIVE FIGURES IN A ROOM.
41 by 41 inches.

Fairfax Murray, Esq.

THE GUARD ROOM. (Here exhibited.)
28½ by 22½ inches. (Attribution doubtful. Probably by Sébastien Bourdon.)

Sir Audley Neeld, Bart.

PLATE VII 1. LANDSCAPE WITH PEASANTS. (Here exhibited.)
18 by 21¾ inches. Replica of the Duke of Westminster's picture with slight differences

2. FAMILY AT BREAKFAST.

Ex Lord Northwick, Thirlstaine House.

FAMILY GROUP. (Mentioned by Dr. Waagen.)

Sir Hubert Parry, Bart.

PLATE VI A TAVERN QUARREL. (P.) (Here exhibited.)
29¼ by 36½ inches. Signed and dated, but date illegible.

Duke of Rutland.

PEASANT LIFE. (Here exhibited.)
21½ by 26 inches. (Same subject as Earl of Carlisle's picture, No. 12.)

Mr. Schroeder.

A PEASANT FAMILY.
Canvas, 45 by 35 inches. Sold at Robinson and Fisher's, October, 1910.

Messrs. Sulley and Co. London.

COUNTRY LIFE.
50 by 38 inches.

Duke of Sutherland.

THE OLD PIPER. (Here exhibited.) PLATE V

On copper, 8 by 11 inches.

Christopher Turnor, Esq.

THE TIRED PEASANT. (Here exhibited.) PLATE XIII

17½ by 23 inches.

Earl of Wemyss.

PEASANTS' REPAST. (Here exhibited.) PLATE XVI

43½ by 49 inches. Replica of picture in Louvre, No. 548, and in Sedelmeyer Sale, 1907, No. 221.

T. Humphry Ward, Esq.

CHILDREN DANCING. (Here exhibited.)

12½ by 15½ inches. Replica of the Earl of Lonsdale's picture "Children Dancing," with slight differences.

Duke of Westminster, Grosvenor House. (No. 125.)

OLD WOMEN AND CHILDREN IN LANDSCAPE.

19½ by 25 inches. Replica of Sir Audley Neeld's picture, No. 10, with slight differences.

Robert C. Witt, Esq.

TRAVELLERS AT AN INN. Nine Figures. (Here exhibited.) PLATE XI

47 by 65 inches.

HOLLAND

Rotterdam, Boyman's Museum.

TWO CHILDREN. (P.) (Here exhibited.)

ITALY

Turin. Comte Louis de Seysell.

1. THE FAMILY REPAST. (P.)
2. PLAYERS AT TRIC-TRAC. (P.)
3. AN INTERIOR.
4. THE DANCING LESSON. (P.)
5. CHILDREN DANCING. (P.)
6. HARVEST SCENE. (P.)
7. CHILDREN DANCING.

All 95 by 1.20 cm.

RUSSIA

St. Petersburg. Hermitage.

1. THE FAMILY REPAST, also known as "La Chambre de la Grandmère," No. 1494. (P.)
   0.59 by 0.73 cm.
2. GRACE BEFORE MEAT. No. 1492. (P.)
   0.51 by 0.60 cm. Signed L. NAIN F.
3. FAMILY OF PEASANTS. No. 1493. (P.)
   0.52 by 0.59 cm.
4. PEASANTS IN AN INN. (No. 390.)
   Attributed in Catalogue to Simon Romero (Spanish School), but more probably by one of the Le Nains.

Count Alexander Scheremetew. Ostenkino, near Moscow.

MEN AND BOYS FIGHTING. (P.)
Reproduced, Staryje Gody, 1910, V and VI, p. 60.

Countess Elizabeth Schuwalow. St. Petersburg.

Replica with slight differences of the "Peasants' Repast" in the Louvre, No. 548, collection Lacaze.

SPAIN

Madrid.

EPISCOPAL BLESSING. No. 1260.
(Attribution doubtful.)

SWEDEN

Stockholm.

THE LABOURERS IN THE VINEYARD. No. 420.
Attributed by Dr. Bode to Karel Fabritius, but seems to have more affinity with the later work of Mathieu Le Nain.

Formerly H. Sander.

SKETCH ON CANVAS. NINE PEOPLE AT A TABLE.

PICTURES WRONGLY ATTRIBUTED TO THE BROTHERS LE NAIN

Florence. Uffizi.
No. 659 ADORATION OF SHEPHERDS.

Nevers.
ST. MICHAEL OFFERING ALMS TO THE VIRGIN.

Paris, St. Laurent.
VISITATION.
Temple.
PRESENTATION.

Professor Louis Benois. St. Petersburg.
WOMAN COMBING A CHILD'S HAIR. (P.)
Exhibited, Staryje Gody, 1908.

Stockholm. University Gallery.
FAMILY OF PEASANTS. (P.)
0.55 by 0.41 c.m.

Valenciennes.
TWO MEN PLAYING CARDS.

And others in the present Exhibition. See Introduction.

CATALOGUE

NOTE.—*The name "Le Nain" is used for convenience to signify pictures by, or attributed to, one or more of the three brothers of that name.*

WORKS OF THE BROTHERS LE NAIN.

1 THE YOUNG MUSICIANS. PLATE I

By LE NAIN.

Two older boys are playing musical instruments while a younger boy sings. On a table a candle, mug, and other objects. In the foreground a dog.

Canvas, 11½ by 15½ inches. *Lent by Lord Aldenham.*

2 GRACE BEFORE MEAT. PLATE II

By LE NAIN.

Four figures round a table, of whom the youngest child says grace. A boy cuts a loaf, a woman holds a pitcher, and an elderly woman looks straight out of the picture. The picture is uniformly dark gray throughout.

Canvas, 17½ by 21½ inches. *Lent by Sir Frederick Cook, Bart.*

3 THE GAMESTERS. PLATE III

By LE NAIN.

A group of four figures, two of whom are playing cards; two others look on, one standing. The scene takes place in a guard-room, where are guns, swords, and other warlike accessories.

Canvas, 33 by 45 inches.

Lent by Wilfrid Ashley, Esq. (from Broadlands).

4 PORTRAIT OF CARDINAL MAZARIN.

Possibly the missing portrait known to have been painted by MATHIEU LE NAIN.

Canvas, 29 by 24 inches. *Lent by Earl Brownlow.*

PLATE IV 5 GROUP OF SIX CHILDREN.

By LE NAIN.

On the left a girl, on the right a boy in red with musical instrument, in the centre four other children, one of whom, a boy in ragged clothes and conical hat, is playing upon a flute.

Panel, $7\frac{1}{2}$ by $9\frac{3}{4}$ inches. *Lent by C. T. D. Crews, Esq.*

PLATE V 6 THE OLD PIPER.

By LE NAIN.

Group of five children listening to an old piper, who is seated playing to them. The children are in ragged clothes. Signed, Lenain. Although assigned to Louis Le Nain on the label, the present exhibition goes to show that it is the work of the elder brother, Antoine.

Copper, 8 by 11 inches. *Lent by the Duke of Sutherland.*

FRONTISPIECE 7 THE ARTIST'S STUDIO.

By LE NAIN.

Group of five men; the artist seated at an easel painting an elderly man seated in front of him. Two others stand behind the latter, one dressed in a red cloak holding a palette. A fifth figure stands behind the painter, and an unframed portrait of an elderly man is resting on the floor. An attempt to identify these figures with the brothers Le Nain has been made by M. Valabrègue in his book on Le Nain, p. 63.

$15\frac{3}{4}$ by $11\frac{1}{2}$ inches. *Lent by the Dowager Marchioness of Bute.*

8 A Tavern Quarrel. Plate VI

By Le Nain.

A game of cards played on a drumhead by soldiers and peasants is interrupted by a quarrel. One of the soldiers, turning aside from the game, draws his sword from the scabbard, which he holds upon his knees, to defend himself from the attack of a young man who threatens him with raised dagger from behind. On the left another peasant, with a dog at his knee and a boy seated behind him, sits drinking wine unconcernedly from a flask. To the right, a young peasant in ragged dress sits petrified and helpless. Between these figures are two others, making in all a group of seven. Signed and dated, the date being illegible, but with some likeness to 1640.

Canvas, 29¼ by 36½ inches. *Lent by Sir Hubert Parry, Bart.*

9 Peasant Life.

By Le Nain.

On the left an old woman seated, and on the right a man standing, with a boy sitting on the ground before him holding a cock. Behind, the façade of a house, with five figures looking out of the windows or descending the stone steps.

Canvas, 20¾ by 25½ inches. *Lent by the Duke of Rutland.*

10 Landscape with Peasants. Plate VII

By Le Nain.

In the foreground of a wide, open landscape an old woman is seated. Three children are grouped on the right, one of them playing a pipe. Other smaller figures are seen in the distance.

Canvas, 18 by 21¾ inches. *Lent by Sir Audley Neeld, Bart.*

11 The Itinerant Musician. Plate VIII

By Le Nain.

Composition of thirteen figures. A man stands in the centre carrying a hurdy-gurdy; behind him a woman with a basket on her arm carrying a child; behind her another man scolding two boys who are fighting. In the

foreground a group of four children attracted by the musician, and on the right two other children also looking up. Background, a cottage with an open door, through which a man looks out. An owl is perched on a window on the right. On the left, distant landscape with water and trees.

Canvas, 56½ by 77 inches.

Lent by Wilfrid Ashley, Esq. (from Broadlands).

PLATE IX

12 PEASANT LIFE.

By LE NAIN.

Same description as No. 30. The pictures are practically identical.

Canvas, 21½ by 26 inches. *Lent by the Earl of Carlisle.*

PLATE X

13 A FLEMISH INTERIOR.

By LE NAIN.

This scene, which more properly should be described as a French interior, represents three figures seated round a cask on which is a plate with some food. An old man holds a large hat, a woman a distaff, and a boy a jug and glass of wine. A child stands in the fireplace behind, the firelight reflected in her face. From the Orleans Gallery.

Canvas, 22 by 25½ inches. *Lent by the Duke of Leeds.*

14 A PEASANT CONCERT.

Attributed to LE NAIN.

The following description is based on the letterpress of the Arundel Club, who published a reproduction of the picture in their 1908 Portfolio.

A particularly brilliant but in some ways puzzling picture. The frank artlessness of the composition, with the three heads at one level and nearly equal distances, the use of certain particular tones of rich red and dark greenish-gray, the proportion and relations of the figures to the frame, are all as characteristic as possible of the style and method of the brothers Le Nain. But certain elements in the subject seem specifically Dutch, particularly the golf club in the background and the *rommelpot* on which the lad, to the right, is playing. Similarly in the treatment, the surface glitter and suddenness of the laughing expression in both lads are alien from the usual serious inwardness of character which we find in the peasant types, both young and old, of the Le Nain brothers, and recall strongly the works of a Haarlem master such as Jan Miense Molenaer. The picture is dated 1629. See Introduction, p. 22.

Canvas, 27 by 33 inches. *Lent by Leopold Hirsch, Esq.*

15 TRAVELLERS AT AN INN. PLATE XI

By LE NAIN.

A group of nine figures, five men seated at table, two with scarlet cloaks; on the left, two youths standing; on the right, a boy and girl, the latter blowing a soap bubble. Two of the men at table are playing cards; a third is pouring wine from a straw-covered bottle into a glass; the other two are apparently amusing themselves by playing some game which involves closing the eye. One holds a hurdy-gurdy under his left arm, the other a roll of paper in his right hand.

Canvas, 47 by 65 inches. *Lent by Robert C. Witt, Esq.*

16 A POOR FAMILY.

By LE NAIN.

Group of four figures in a row; an old man leaning on a stick, an old woman seated and two children standing. A street scene with baskets, scales, and other accessories.

Canvas, 16½ by 20¾ inches. *Lent by Lord Bagot.*

17 THE GUARD ROOM.

Attributed to LE NAIN.

An elderly man wearing helmet and breastplate is seated at table holding a glass; another soldier stands behind; on left, two youths fighting over cards; on right, a seated figure bending over the fire, and a ragged boy in centre. The scene is an interior of a gloomy dungeon, with the light falling strongly from the left; still life accessories.

Attributed to Le Nain, and as such exhibited at the Royal Academy, "Old Masters," 1908. The present exhibition does not tend to bear out this ascription, and the name of Sébastien Bourdon has been proposed for the author of this fine picture. Somewhat similar pictures by Bourdon exist at Cassel (*vide* photographs on table).

28½ by 22½ inches. *Lent by C. Fairfax Murray, Esq.*

18 OLD WOMAN SPINNING.

By LE NAIN.

An old woman, seen three-quarter length, is sitting in a room holding distaff and spindle. A cat is seen on the window-ledge high up on the left.

Canvas, 44 by 36 inches. *Lent by the Hon. Mrs. Baillie Hamilton.*

19 CHILDREN DANCING.

By LE NAIN.

Group of eight figures. On the left, a tall youth piping to a group of girls and boys who are dancing. Behind is seen the figure of an old woman. A replica, with slight differences, of the Earl of Lonsdale's picture, "Children Dancing."

Canvas, 12½ by 15½ inches. *Lent by T. Humphry Ward, Esq.*

PLATE XII 20 INTERIOR WITH FIGURES.

By LE NAIN.

In a room lighted from a high window, on the left, a young girl in yellow dress is seated by a table, behind which is seen the figure of a boy.

11 by 9 inches. *Lent by the Corporation of Glasgow.*

21 PORTRAIT OF TWO CHILDREN.

By LE NAIN.

The same children recur in the "Dancing Lesson" at Turin.

Lent by the Boymans Museum, Rotterdam.

22 PEASANTS' REPAST.

By LE NAIN.

A group of six figures outside a wooden building. On the right an old man offers wine to a woman seated by a cask. To the left three children with flowers, a cat, and poultry. In the background a woman with an ass.

37½ by 47 inches. *Lent by Dr. Paul Müller, Paris.*

23 THE TIRED PEASANT. PLATE XIII

By LE NAIN.

On the right, an old man seated in a chair asleep. In the centre, a woman, pointing to him, bids two children playing in the foreground keep silence. A landscape with a well, at which is seen the figure of a man on the left. Various objects of still-life on the ground.

Canvas, 17½ by 23 inches. *Lent by Christopher Turnor, Esq.*

24 THE VILLAGE POULTERER. PLATE XIV

By LE NAIN.

Group of five figures; an old man seated in the centre between two coops filled with dead poultry. On the right stands a woman, bearing a brass vessel on her head. On the left a woman seated. Two children stand behind on either side of the old man. A large half-timbered house in the background, with an open landscape on the right.

Canvas, 39 by 51½ inches. *Lent by Arthur Kay, Esq.*

25 WOMAN SELLING FRUIT. PLATE XV

By LE NAIN.

Composition of eight figures and animals; a cow, a goat, two sheep, a donkey, and a dog. In the foreground an old woman holds a basket of fruit. At her knee a child, and a child stands beside her chair. Round the stone trough, on the left, are three figures. In the centre of the background a man and a woman standing on either side of a donkey.

This appears to be the "missing" picture mentioned by M. Valabrègue, *op. cit.*, p. 173. It was engraved by J. Mitchel under the title *Proedium hollandicum*, after a painting in the gallery of Robert Strange. Published by Boydell, London, 1775.

Canvas, 34 by 42½ inches. *Lent by the Hunterian Museum, Glasgow.*

PLATE XVI 26 PEASANTS' REPAST.

By LE NAIN.

A composition of six figures, three men seated round an improvised table drinking red wine; behind them stand a woman, a youth with a fiddle, and a boy. The scene is an interior, showing an open fireplace, a window with half-opened shutter, and canopied bedstead. In the foreground, to the left, a white dog.

An identical composition, save for the addition of a figure of a small boy leaning against the fireplace, is No. 548 in the Louvre, Lacaze Collection, dated 1642. Another version, also with the additional figure, was No. 221 in the Sedelmeyer Sale, 1907.

Canvas, 43½ by 49 inches. *Lent by the Earl of Wemyss (from Gosford).*

27 GROUP OF SEVEN FIGURES. PEN AND INK (DRAWING).

By LE NAIN.

4 by 3½ inches. Collections: Lord Spencer and Bale.

Lent by J. P. Heseltine, Esq.

28 THE SEVEN DEEDS OF MERCY—VISITING THOSE IN PRISON.

By MICHAEL SWEERTS.

The interior of a prison, showing an old man seated, shackled, another standing by, others close behind. In distance to left a group of five figures, variously disposed, one in the stocks. Passers-by seen through an iron grating.

Canvas, 29 by 38½ inches. *Lent by Arthur Clifton, Esq.*

See following number.

29 THE SEVEN DEEDS OF MERCY—BURYING THE DEAD.

By MICHAEL SWEERTS.

An elderly man and a younger one, in a white turban, are lowering a corpse from a stretcher into a grave. Background of two Italian churches and other buildings with numerous figures.

Canvas, 29 by 38½ inches. *Lent by Arthur Clifton, Esq.*

This and the preceding number form a pair clearly by the same hand, once considered to be that of the Spanish painter, Zurbaran, but by modern criticism

connected with the Le Nains, and on that ground included in the present exhibition. A closer study supports a more probable attribution to Michael Sweerts, a Dutch painter of the School of Haarlem, who spent part of his life in Rome. For further particulars, see Introduction, p. 22.

30 PORTRAIT OF A BOY.

By MICHAEL SWEERTS.

Head and shoulders, turned to left.

Canvas, 9½ by 7 inches. *Lent by Dr. Hofstede de Groot.*

31 THE STUDIO.

By MICHAEL SWEERTS.

A boy, seen from behind, seated, making a copy of a picture representing a battle scene; a lay figure on the right.

Various attributions have been suggested for this interesting picture—Peter de Hoogh, Terburg, Metsu, Vermeer of Delft, and, with greater probability, Michael Sweerts.

The picture of the battle-scene upon the wall is probably by Van der Stoffe or Hendrik de Meyer.

This and the preceding picture have been included in consequence of a supposed similarity of their style with the works of Le Nain, but this Exhibition does not tend to bear out the ascription to the latter.

Panel, 12½ by 16 inches. *Lent by Sir Frederick Cook, Bart.*

32 HEAD OF A BOY.

By MICHAEL SWEERTS.

Drawing. Black and red chalk on paper. Collector's mark, V and a coronet in the lower corner.

It is suggested that this may be by the same hand as No. 4.

7 by 5½ inches. *Lent by Dr. Hofstede de Groot.*

CHISWICK PRESS: CHARLES WHITTINGHAM AND CO.
TOOKS COURT, CHANCERY LANE, LONDON.

PLATE I

THE YOUNG MUSICIANS. (NO.1)

PLATE II

GRACE BEFORE MEAT. (NO. 2)

PLATE III

THE GAMESTERS. (NO. 3)

PLATE IV

GROUP OF SIX CHILDREN. (NO. 5)

PLATE V.

THE OLD PIPER. (NO. 6)

PLATE VI

A TAVERN QUARREL. (NO. 8)

PLATE VII

LANDSCAPE WITH PEASANTS (NO 10)

PLATE VIII

THE ITINERANT MUSICIAN. (NO. II)

PLATE IX

PEASANT LIFE (NO 12)

PLATE X

A FLEMISH INTERIOR. (NO. 13)

PLATE XI

TRAVELLERS AT AN INN. (NO. 15)

PLATE XII

INTERIOR WITH FIGURES. (NO. 20)

PLATE XIII

THE TIRED PEASANT. (NO. 23)

PLATE XIV

THE VILLAGE POULTERER. (NO. 24)

PLATE XV

WOMAN SELLING FRUIT. (NO. 25)

PLATE XVI

PEASANTS' REPAST (NO. 26)

PLATE XVII

LAZZARONI. (PAGE 14)

(In Possession of Lord Leconfield, Petworth)

PLATE XVIII

BACCHANALIAN PROCESSION. (PAGE 18)

(In Possession of M. M. Bernheim Jeune, Paris)

PLATE XIX

PORTRAIT OF A YOUNG MAN. (PAGE 18)

(Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge)

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